

**Amendments to the Claims**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the above-identified application.

**Listing of Claims**

1. (Previously Presented) A method comprising:  
a transmitting device transmitting data at a first non-zero rate to a memory for storage therein during a first period of time;  
the transmitting device transmitting data at a second non-zero rate to the memory for storage therein during a second period of time;  
the transmitting device transmitting data at a third non-zero rate to the memory for storage therein during a third period of time;  
wherein the third period of time is subsequent to the second period of time, and  
wherein the second period of time is subsequent to the first period of time, and;  
wherein the third non-zero rate is greater than the second non-zero rate, and  
wherein the second non-zero rate is greater than the first non-zero rate.
2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the memory device comprises a FIFO buffer.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the transmitting device is contained in a switching fabric, wherein the memory is contained in a line card coupled to the switching fabric via a data link, and wherein the transmitter transmits data via the data link to the memory for storage therein.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising:  
generating a rate control signal; and  
transmitting the rate control signal to the transmitting device to instruct the  
transmitting device to stop transmitting data at the first non-zero rate and  
start transmitting data at the second non-zero rate;  
wherein the transmitting device stops transmitting data to the memory device at  
the first data rate and starts transmitting data to the memory device at the  
second data rate in response to the transmitting device receiving the rate  
control signal.
5. (Original) The method of claim 4 further comprising:  
generating first data quantity value representing a quantity of data stored in the  
memory device at a first point in time;  
comparing the first data quantity value to a first predetermined value;  
wherein the rate control signal is generated in response to comparing the first data  
quantity value to the first predetermined value.
6. (Original) The method of claim 5 further comprising:  
comparing the first data quantity value to a plurality of predetermined values,  
wherein the first predetermined value is one of the plurality of first  
predetermined values;  
wherein the rate control signal is generated in response to comparing the first data  
quantity value to the plurality of predetermined values.
7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5 further comprising:  
generating a second data quantity value representing a quantity of data stored in  
the memory device at a second point in time, wherein the second point in  
time is prior to the first point in time;  
comparing the first data quantity value to the second data quantity value;  
wherein the rate control signal is generated if the first data quantity value is not  
equal to the second data quantity value.

8. (Original) The method of claim 5 wherein generating the first data quantity value comprises:

generating total data input count at the first point in time, wherein the total data input count represents a quantity of data input to the memory device during a period of time ending in the first point in time;  
generating total data output count at the first point in time, wherein the total data output count represents a quantity of data output from the memory device during the period of time ending in the first point in time;  
subtracting the total data output count from total data input count.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Previously Presented) An apparatus comprising:

a memory device configured to receive data from a transmitting device for storage therein;

a circuit configured to generate and transmit a rate control signal instructing the transmitting device to stop transmitting data to the memory device at a first non-zero rate and to begin transmitting data to the memory device at a second non-zero rate, and to generate and transmit another rate control signal instructing the transmitting device to stop transmitting data to the memory device at the second non-zero rate and begin transmitting data to the memory circuit at a third non-zero rate;

wherein the third non-zero rate is greater than the second non-zero rate, and  
wherein the second non-zero rate is greater than the first non-zero rate.

11. (Original) The apparatus of claim 10 wherein the memory device comprises a FIFO buffer.

12. (Original) The apparatus of claim 10 further comprising the transmitting device, wherein the transmitting device is contained in a switching fabric, wherein the memory is contained in a line card coupled to the switching fabric via a data link, and wherein the transmitter transmits data via the data link to the memory for storage therein.

13. (Original) The apparatus of claim 10 further comprising:  
a first circuit for generating a first data quantity value representing a quantity of data stored in the memory device at a first point in time;  
a first comparing circuit for comparing the first data quantity value to a first predetermined value;  
wherein the circuit generates the rate control signal in response to comparing the first data quantity value to the first predetermined value.
14. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13 further comprising:  
a plurality of comparing circuits, each one of which is configured to compare the first data quantity value to a respective one of a plurality of predetermined values, wherein the first comparing circuit is one of the plurality of comparing circuits, and wherein the first predetermined value is one of the plurality of first predetermined values;  
wherein the circuit generates the rate control signal in response to comparing the first data quantity value to the plurality of predetermined values.
15. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13 further comprising:  
a second circuit for generating a second data quantity value representing a quantity of data stored in the memory device at a second point in time, wherein the second point in time is prior to the first point in time;  
a second comparing circuit for comparing the first data quantity value to the second data quantity value;  
wherein the circuit generates the rate control signal if the first data quantity value is not equal to the second data quantity value.
16. (Original) The apparatus of claim 15 wherein the first and second circuits are the same circuits.
17. – 23 (Cancelled)

24. (Previously Presented) An apparatus comprising:  
a memory device configured to receive data from a transmitting device for storage therein;  
a first means for generating and transmitting a rate control signal instructing the transmitting device to stop transmitting data to the memory device at a first non-zero rate and to begin transmitting data to the memory device at a second non-zero rate, and for generating and transmitting another rate control signal instructing the transmitting device to stop transmitting data to the memory device at the second non-zero rate and to begin transmitting data to the memory device at a third non-zero rate;  
wherein the third non-zero rate is greater than the second non-zero rate, and  
wherein the second non-zero rate is greater than or less than the first non-zero rate.
25. (Original) The apparatus of claim 24 wherein the memory device comprises a FIFO buffer.
26. (Original) The apparatus of claim 24 further comprising the transmitting device, wherein the transmitting device is contained in a switching fabric, wherein the memory is contained in a line card coupled to the switching fabric via a data link, and wherein the transmitter transmits data via the data link to the memory for storage therein.
27. (Original) The apparatus of claim 24 further comprising:  
a second means for generating a first data quantity value representing a quantity of data stored in the memory device at a first point in time;  
a third means for comparing the first data quantity value to a first predetermined value;  
wherein the first means generates the rate control signal in response to comparing the first data quantity value to the first predetermined value.
28. (Cancelled)

29. (Previously Presented) A method comprising:
- a transmitting device transmitting data at a first non-zero rate to a memory for storage therein during a first period of time;
  - the transmitting device transmitting data at a second non-zero rate to the memory for storage therein during a second period of time;
  - wherein the second period of time is subsequent to the first period of time, and;
  - wherein the second non-zero rate is greater than or less than the first non-zero rate;
  - generating a rate control signal; and
  - transmitting the rate control signal to the transmitting device to instruct the transmitting device to stop transmitting data at the first non-zero rate and start transmitting data at the second non-zero rate;
  - wherein the transmitting device stops transmitting data to the memory device at the first data rate and starts transmitting data to the memory device at the second data rate in response to the transmitting device receiving the rate control signal;
  - generating a first data quantity value representing a quantity of data stored in the memory device at a first point in time;
  - comparing the first data quantity value to a first predetermined value;
  - wherein the rate control signal is generated in response to comparing the first data quantity value to the first predetermined value;
  - generating total data input count at the first point in time, wherein the total data input count represents a quantity of data input to the memory device during a period of time ending in the first point in time;
  - generating total data output count at the first point in time, wherein the total data output count represents a quantity of data output from the memory device during the period of time ending in the first point in time;
  - subtracting the total data output count from total data input count.

30. (Previously Presented) A method comprising:  
a transmitting device transmitting data at a first non-zero rate to a memory for storage therein during a first period of time;  
the transmitting device transmitting data at a second non-zero rate to the memory for storage therein during a second period of time;  
the transmitting device transmitting data at a third non-zero rate to the memory for storage therein during a third period of time;  
wherein the third period of time is subsequent to the second period of time, and wherein the second period of time is subsequent to the first period of time, and;  
wherein the third non-zero rate is less than the second non-zero rate, and wherein the second non-zero rate is less than the first non-zero rate.
31. (Previously Presented) An apparatus comprising:  
a memory device configured to receive data from a transmitting device for storage therein;  
a circuit configured to generate and transmit a rate control signal instructing the transmitting device to stop transmitting data to the memory device at a first non-zero rate and to begin transmitting data to the memory device at a second non-zero rate, and to generate and transmit another rate control signal instructing the transmitting device to stop transmitting data to the memory device at the second non-zero rate and begin transmitting data to the memory circuit at a third non-zero rate;  
wherein the third non-zero rate is less than the second non-zero rate, and wherein the second non-zero rate is less than the first non-zero rate.

32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30 further comprising:  
generating a rate control signal; and  
transmitting the rate control signal to the transmitting device to instruct the  
transmitting device to stop transmitting data at the first non-zero rate and  
start transmitting data at the second non-zero rate;  
wherein the transmitting device stops transmitting data to the memory device at  
the first data rate and starts transmitting data to the memory device at the  
second data rate in response to the transmitting device receiving the rate  
control signal.
33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 32 further comprising:  
generating first data quantity value representing a quantity of data stored in the  
memory device at a first point in time;  
comparing the first data quantity value to a first predetermined value;  
wherein the rate control signal is generated in response to comparing the first data  
quantity value to the first predetermined value.
34. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33 further comprising:  
comparing the first data quantity value to a plurality of predetermined values,  
wherein the first predetermined value is one of the plurality of first  
predetermined values;  
wherein the rate control signal is generated in response to comparing the first data  
quantity value to the plurality of predetermined values.



35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 31 further comprising:  
generating a rate control signal; and  
transmitting the rate control signal to the transmitting device to instruct the transmitting device to stop transmitting data at the first non-zero rate and start transmitting data at the second non-zero rate;  
wherein the transmitting device stops transmitting data to the memory device at the first data rate and starts transmitting data to the memory device at the second data rate in response to the transmitting device receiving the rate control signal.
36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35 further comprising:  
generating first data quantity value representing a quantity of data stored in the memory device at a first point in time;  
comparing the first data quantity value to a first predetermined value;  
wherein the rate control signal is generated in response to comparing the first data quantity value to the first predetermined value.
37. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 36 further comprising:  
comparing the first data quantity value to a plurality of predetermined values, wherein the first predetermined value is one of the plurality of first predetermined values;  
wherein the rate control signal is generated in response to comparing the first data quantity value to the plurality of predetermined values.